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Reporting from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

**Work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications
from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

**Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group
of Experts on National Communications from Parties
not included in Annex I to the Convention: technical report
on problems and constraints, as well as lessons learned and
best practices, in the process of and the preparation of
national communications and biennial update reports by
Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report outlines the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices identified in the process of and the preparation of national communications by Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties). It has been prepared by compiling and synthesizing information from various sources provided by non-Annex I Parties on the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices relating to the process of and the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports. This report will inform the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention on the identification and provision of technical assistance for non-Annex I Parties, and will also serve as a source of lessons learned and best practices for non-Annex I Parties.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 19/CP.19, continued the mandate of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for a period of five years, from 2014 to 2018.¹

2. The COP also decided that the CGE, in fulfilling its mandate, shall continue to provide technical advice and support to Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) to improve the process of and the preparation of national communications (NCs) and biennial update reports (BURs). The CGE shall, among other things:

(a) Identify and provide technical assistance regarding problems and constraints that have affected the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs by non-Annex I Parties;²

(b) Provide information and technical advice based on, where possible, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs by non-Annex I Parties, including in relation to finance and other support available.³

B. Scope of the note

3. The CGE, in response to the above mandate, agreed to prepare, as a part of its work programme for 2014,⁴ a technical report compiling and synthesizing the available information on the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs by non-Annex I Parties.

4. Further, the CGE also agreed to conduct a survey to gather more up-to-date feedback from non-Annex I Parties, as well as from multilateral agencies involved in the process of and the preparation of NCs and/or BURs, that would complement the compiled and synthesized information.

5. Currently, non-Annex I Parties have limited experience in the preparation of BURs. However, owing to a significant overlap between the themes covered by both NCs and BURs, it is logical to assume that many of the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs will also be applicable to the process of and the preparation of BURs. This has been substantiated by the results of the survey referred to in paragraph 4 above, where a number of respondents indicated that this was the case.

6. This technical report is a compilation and synthesis of the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs. The information contained in this report has been obtained from, among others:

¹ Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 1.

² Decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(a).

³ Decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(g).

⁴ See <<http://unfccc.int/2608.php>>

(a) Reports by the National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), which was jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);⁶

(b) Past CGE survey reports;⁷

(c) Recent NCs from non-Annex I Parties;⁸

(d) The survey conducted by the CGE in 2014 on problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs;

(e) The report on the two regional training workshops on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, which contains some elements relating to problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of BURs.⁹ These elements reflect only the views of the workshop participants.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

7. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation, having considered this report, may wish to provide further guidance to the CGE, as appropriate, on the provision of technical assistance and support to non-Annex I Parties in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs.

II. Summary of the steps taken to compile and synthesize the information

8. Between January and April 2014, the CGE compiled and synthesized existing information on the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs by non-Annex I Parties.

9. With a view to complementing the compiled and synthesized information with more up-to-date feedback, the CGE conducted an online survey, from 15 April to 15 May 2014, focused on the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs by non-Annex I Parties.

10. By 15 May 2014, a total of 92 respondents from 72 non-Annex I Parties and two multilateral agencies involved in initiatives to support the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs had participated in the survey. The respondents consisted of national focal points, NC and BUR project coordinators, as well as multilateral agency representatives (UNDP and UNEP). Of the 72 non-Annex I Parties represented, 32 respondents were from the African region; 25 from the Asia-Pacific region; 20 from the Latin American and Caribbean region; and 11 from the Eastern European region.

III. Results of the compilation and synthesis

11. The following section of the report contains the results of the compilation and synthesis, with a focus on the following areas: institutional arrangements; national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories; vulnerability and adaptation assessments; mitigation

⁶ See <http://ncsp.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country%20papers%20Final%20Version_1.pdf> and <http://ncsp.undp.org/sites/default/files/National%20Communications_Lessons%20Learned.pdf>.

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2011/5/Add.2 and FCCC/SBI/2011/10/Add.1.

⁸ See <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_1_natcom/items/2979.php>.

⁹ FCCC/SBI/2014/18.

assessments; and cross-cutting issues, such as the provision of financial and technical support.

A. Institutional arrangements

12. This section describes the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices relating to institutional arrangements for managing the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs.

1. Problems and constraints⁹

13. The structure and affiliation of government institutions related to climate change are subject to frequent changes. National experts vacate their posts for a variety of reasons and the knowledge and technical capacity of their replacement is frequently inadequate. This creates a capacity issue, as the experts vacating their posts are, in most cases, the only expert in their field. Additionally, the departure of these experts usually leads to a loss of established data collection networks.

14. Inadequate specific legislative and/or policy support for climate change initiatives usually results in an insufficient institutional basis for the preparation of NCs and BURs. Consequently, the responsible institution is unable to justify the resource commitment for the preparation and submission of NCs and BURs. Further, a lack of legislation renders the process of data collection from the private sector extremely challenging, especially in cases where data collection and storage involve costs.

15. Public institutions usually have an insufficient number of qualified personnel possessing the technical knowledge required to undertake technical studies and an understanding of the methodologies used for the preparation of NCs. Training workshops organized with the aim of addressing this issue are sometimes ineffective, as most attendees lack the background needed to fully benefit from the knowledge delivered.

16. In most cases, consultants were contracted to prepare the initial NCs, with experts from responsible ministries primarily involved in facilitating and completing this work. Consequently, the staff from the responsible ministries failed to benefit from the capacity-building associated with undertaking the process of preparing and submitting the NC.

2. Lessons learned¹⁰

17. As a way of increasing awareness on climate change and its impacts, and of improving the countries' ability to assess their national vulnerability, Parties are involving experts from governmental institutions, research institutions, universities, the private sector, civil society organizations, women and indigenous groups, the general public and municipalities. The involvement of these bodies has the potential to ensure that the preparation of NCs is a continuous process and enhances long-term data sharing at the national, local, government and private-sector levels. It is also perceived as a way of building capacity at all levels for the preparation of future national reports.

18. Through the scope of the NCs, non-Annex I Parties have realized that climate change is no longer an issue that can be delegated to one ministry or a few institutions; rather, it is a matter to be taken up by Prime Ministers and Presidents and their respective administrations.

⁹ In this report, all problems and constraints were identified by non-Annex I Parties themselves.

¹⁰ In this report, all lessons learned were identified by non-Annex I Parties themselves and refer to observations made during the process of and/or the preparation of NCs and/or BURs. They could have a positive, negative or neutral effect.

19. Collaboration with NCSP was positively viewed by Parties as a way of improving the presentation, sequence and relevance of the information in NCs. This collaboration was also useful in evaluating the level of uncertainty of the information generated by consultants and in enhancing domestic capacity for the preparation of future reports. Additionally, NCSP has provided guidance on the level of information required and on how local institutions could be organized to improve their preparation for subsequent NCs.

20. Some non-Annex I Parties are establishing national climate change committees comprised of technical experts from multiple government departments. The committee members are expected to be familiar with the objectives of the Convention and the obligations of Parties, and are responsible for coordinating climate change initiatives within relevant ministries and helping to facilitate the process of preparing NCs. This approach is expected to ensure that government data sources are readily available for the preparation of national reports. Further, some non-Annex I Parties are establishing connections with ongoing national climate change activities, including projects on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD).

21. Some non-Annex I Parties are reviewing and aligning national policies, strategies, plans and programmes with emerging issues, particularly in the context of the environment and climate change. Institutional frameworks are being strengthened and made relevant to readily address the risks posed by climate change with regard to social and economic development.

22. With respect to BURs and subsequent NCs, some Parties have decided to build capacity in order to cope with the enhanced reporting requirements in the UNFCCC process by transferring tasks previously performed by consultants to governmental institutions. Parties also view this approach as a means of retaining institutional memory, especially when implemented in conjunction with an information-sharing goal.

23. In addition to workshops and training seminars, non-Annex I Parties are establishing national professional networks and networks with experts from other countries in order to facilitate the exchange of information and data needed for the various sections of national reports.

24. Some non-Annex I Parties are tailoring the relevant Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) guidelines and guidance documents to their specific national circumstances and are training sectoral experts responsible for preparing NCs members to use these tailored guidelines and guidance documents to meet reporting requirements.

3. Best practices¹¹⁾

25. National experts have benefited from working with regional experts, especially when they speak the same language. Non-Annex I Parties have found that, as a result, the quality of NCs has been enhanced as the NC team draws from the experience of regional experts, who may have encountered and resolved similar issues while working in countries from the same region.

26. Careful selection of the national reporting team, as well as the profiling of its members, is useful from the start. Where possible, the potential replacements of team members should be identified from the outset and gradually introduced to the process. Some non-Annex I Parties have found that having a team that embraces new members and comprises at least 10 members increases the likelihood of the successful preparation of the NC. However, the team should be structured into core and non-core members. This

¹¹⁾ In this report, all best practices were identified by non-Annex I Parties themselves and refer to any lessons learned and implemented over a period of time that have resulted in an observable improvement in the process and/or product.

approach will also help to retain institutional memory and increase familiarity with the limitations, obstacles and challenges in, as well as the solutions for, the development of future national reports.

27. The establishment of memoranda of understanding with data providers from the public and private sectors, as well as their involvement in the national reporting initiatives, has been beneficial to the collection and processing of data, which in turn has improved reliability, fostered national ownership and increased national confidence in the results of NCs. Some non-Annex I Parties, in establishing memoranda of understanding, assured the private sector that the information provided will not be used, for example, to increase taxes, but strictly for the purposes of preparing NCs and BURs.

28. Some non-Annex I Parties have found it beneficial to establish an expert group for each thematic area of the NC, with a coordinator who reports to the NC project manager and presents regular updates to a national steering committee. The expert group coordinator ensures that the content of the thematic area is consistent with the relevant sections of the national reporting guidelines and delivered within agreed timelines.

29. Attendance at training workshops has helped both consultants and government officials in the preparation of NCs by enhancing their respective capacity to complete the reporting process and to initiate the creation and institutionalization of the NC process by ensuring the sustained availability of expertise in all sectors.

30. A few non-Annex I Parties have noted several positive impacts of establishing a national inventory system, including improved institutional arrangements, the development of a GHG database, the establishment of reviewing processes and the development of quality control/quality assurance measures.

31. One non-Annex I Party found it a good practice to contract a non-governmental organization for the publication of quarterly newsletters on activities for the preparation of NCs. This was seen as a cost-effective tool that largely contributed to the effective communication of climate change issues to a wide audience. It was highly appreciated by national partners and has been referenced at various events.

B. National greenhouse gas inventories

32. This section describes the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices relating to national GHG inventories with regard to the process of and the preparation of NCs and BURs.

1. Problems and constraints

33. In most cases, relevant data providers do not conduct data collection with the preparation of national GHG inventories as the primary objective. Consequently, the format of the data collected may not be suitable for national GHG inventory purposes, or the data may be incomplete. Some of the specific data collection problems identified by non-Annex I Parties include:

(a) Highly aggregated data which are unsuitable for the preparation of a national GHG inventory consistent with the IPCC guidelines;

(b) Inadequate data management systems for national GHG inventories, thereby rendering the process of data archiving and use challenging. In most cases, data providers do not have the capacity to archive the data over a period of several years and tend to lose track of the archived data. Also, the data are archived in specific formats, including in 'soft'

and/or 'hard' copy, and in multiple locations across different agencies, leading to difficulties in obtaining and using the data;

(c) Data collection processes frequently lack formal arrangements and the data are often provided without sufficient metadata, thereby rendering the data unverifiable.

34. Where they are not satisfied with the default emission factors (EFs) and/or other EFs contained in the IPCC EF database, non-Annex I Parties are faced with the challenge of developing country-specific EFs. While these should reduce uncertainty and increase the accuracy of national GHG inventories, non-Annex I Parties lack the expertise and resources to facilitate their development.

35. Parties with ineffective institutional arrangements tend to conduct activity data collection on an on-demand basis with no obligation on the part of the data generators to periodically collect and submit complete data to the NC team or to a designated national GHG emission data coordination centre. Some companies are prepared to use litigation to avoid sharing data for the preparation of national reports.

36. Some non-Annex I Parties are unable to perform a meaningful comparison of national GHG inventories or produce sectoral emissions trends owing to the use of different guidelines over time: they are using the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* for the preparation of sections of or the entire national GHG inventory in place of the *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, used in previous years.

2. Lessons learned

37. Some non-Annex I Parties are taking advantage of the work completed for other projects related to the UNFCCC process. For example, country-specific EFs and methodologies developed for sustainable transport, energy efficiency and biomass projects, mostly funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), are being used in the preparation of national GHG inventories.

38. Better statistical sampling and additional measurements are perceived by non-Annex I Parties as a way of improving the quality of country-specific EFs. Industry associations are being engaged in the development of country-specific EFs in some non-Annex I Parties. Several Parties have set goals to demonstrate that the share of emissions calculated using higher-tier methodologies is increasing from one national report to the next.

39. Updating and revising the details and assumptions made in previous NCs has improved the quality of the data available to some non-Annex I Parties for the preparation of their national GHG inventories. The updates and revisions are being performed by consulting recently published information on national economic developments and updated demographic parameters in order to develop more accurate estimates.

40. Non-Annex I Parties are developing various ways of dealing with data-related issues, including by:

(a) Making efforts to raise the awareness of data providers and key stakeholders on data gaps and methods for data collection, as well as by dedicating resources to explore approaches for dealing with data gaps. To address less significant data gaps, and when attempting to make highly aggregated data useful for reporting purposes, some non-Annex I Parties have used extrapolation, averages, downscaling and expert judgment, while surveys and interviews, together with the establishment of memoranda of understanding with relevant institutions to facilitate data sharing, are being used for more significant data gaps. Other non-Annex I Parties have created and shared simple data collection spreadsheets with relevant government departments. This approach has been accompanied

by training courses for professionals working in these sectors in order to harmonize understanding and ensure consistency;

(b) Ensuring the continuous flow of data from national institutions to the NC team, by establishing a national GHG inventory system to collect and organize data according to IPCC national GHG inventory sectors and to disseminate information on GHG emissions. The primary components of these systems are a national registration and reporting platform, indicators and baselines for each sector, and a verification system for assessing uncertainties and quality control;

(c) Advocating for the creation of a legal instrument (e.g. by-law, regulation) that will require the disclosure, on a continuous basis, of activity data by major GHG emitters to the ministry responsible for the environment. A few non-Annex I Parties have established national and sectoral focal points for data management and have created methods for improving data sharing among institutions. The sectoral focal points are also responsible for regularly monitoring and performing consistency checks on the collected data, which is expected to reduce inconsistency among data sets;

(d) Documenting the steps involved in the data collection process and annotating the collected data to help retain institutional memory and serve as the basis for a larger data depository.

41. Some non-Annex I Parties are using intra-team peer reviews for quality assurance. For example, the contribution of the team preparing the information on the agriculture sector is reviewed by the team preparing the information on the energy sector, and the contribution of the land use, land-use change and forestry team is reviewed by the agriculture team, whose results are in turn reviewed by the waste team, and so on. These intra-team peer reviews are included as one of the tasks in each team member's terms of reference.

42. Some non-Annex I Parties recommend a system with a minimum of two experts per sector: one responsible for entering the activity data and EFs, with the other responsible for checking them and either validating or confirming the need to perform a recalculation. The recalculation, when needed, is performed by both experts to ensure that the final results accurately reflect the national GHG inventory for that sector.

3. Best practices

43. Regional capacity-building GHG inventory workshops on improved reporting tools conducted by the UNFCCC have reportedly enhanced the capacity of existing national experts, and also increased the pool of experts within a range of national institutions.

44. To address gaps in activity data, some non-Annex I Parties have prepared a summary report which identifies the gaps and a template to guide national institutions in the collection of data, which have proved to be effective. By sharing these documents with the institutions concerned, some NC teams have obtained good quality data which have been complete and sufficiently detailed to enable the application of an IPCC tier 2 methodology in some subsectors. This has yielded good results in cases where companies have the required activity data but do not want to share them because they are not required to do so.

45. A few non-Annex I Parties have found it a good practice to use the Monte Carlo simulation (IPCC tier 2 methodology) to conduct the uncertainty assessment for the key categories.

46. To deal with highly aggregated activity data, some non-Annex I Parties have used and reported positive results when filtering one type of information from another, and/or when creating coefficients (based on expert judgment) that can be used to split aggregated information into different values. Though time-consuming and labour-intensive, teams

which have factored in time for such work during the planning phase have found it to be beneficial.

47. Some non-Annex I Parties have found that organizing sectoral meetings on the topic of information gathering, in which activity data and EFs were regularly discussed, is a valuable exercise. Parties recommend that these activities should be carried out in association with a centralized information system for all relevant data generated during the inventory process to allow for a constant comparative assessment.

48. For a better understanding of national GHG inventory results, some non-Annex I Parties suggest providing documentation on, among other things, activity data and the underlying assumptions used, including the rationale for their use. Some Parties also recommend providing information in the national GHG inventory report on the methodological approaches used and steps taken, as well as on the sources of information on which the analysis is based.

49. Some national experts have addressed the issue of transfer of experience and knowledge to future national teams by creating a national GHG inventory reference manual and accompanying Excel worksheets that answer the recurrent questions encountered during the national GHG inventory development process. The reference manual provides information on how to approach the various tasks involved in preparing a national GHG inventory. It covers, *inter alia*, activities by sector and identifies institutions that host nationally relevant data.

C. Vulnerability and adaptation assessments

50. This section describes the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices with regard to conducting vulnerability and adaptation assessments.

1. Problems and constraints

51. Some non-Annex I Parties reported that existing training workshops on climate modelling or vulnerability and adaptation assessments are of insufficient duration to be effective at ensuring that the knowledge of designated national participants is at the level required to conduct a full climate modelling or vulnerability and adaptation assessment exercise.

52. Some non-Annex I Parties also reported a lack of sufficient baseline time series for the stream flow rate, climate conditions and calibration of other impact models.

53. Several non-Annex I Parties reported that existing funds are insufficient to carry out technical studies that would cover all the prioritized socioeconomic sectors.

2. Lessons learned

54. Some non-Annex I Parties are including case studies on sectors of interest to the national economy in the vulnerability and adaptation section of their NCs. These have mostly included health, water resources, agriculture and coastal zones. Several non-Annex I Parties are also exploring the possibility of using the preparation of NCs as an opportunity for the integration of climate change responses into water, energy, agriculture, health, education, social and environmental policies.

55. Some governments have developed a policy to provide the basis for nationally led adaptation planning initiatives and recognized the need to mainstream adaptation into national planning processes. The institutions involved and their work are being used for the preparation of the vulnerability and adaptation section of NCs.

56. A number of non-Annex I Parties are prioritizing areas with a history of natural disasters, especially those with high population density and tourism activity, for a more detailed analysis, and are including these as an additional feature of the vulnerability and adaptation section of the NC. Some non-Annex I Parties have also elaborated vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the health sector, including an analysis of the correlation between natural phenomena and the occurrence of disease, with the hope that it will ultimately help to inform future plans to combat disease.

57. As a solution to data scarcity issues (e.g. in the residential subsector, which is relevant for complementing the information on vulnerability and adaptation assessments), some national teams are using first-hand information gathered from communities through face-to-face interviews with residents, as well as surveys.

58. Models developed and estimates made for previous NCs are being relied on and simply amended for future NCs by some countries.

3. Best practices

59. A few non-Annex I Parties have tailored the selected methodological framework to the requirements of the vulnerability and adaptation assessments, ensuring that it is suited to the national technical capacity, available data, time constraints and resources.

60. Some non-Annex I Parties are using PRECIS,¹² a regional climate model, to improve the accuracy of projections of climate change scenarios while paying particular attention to seasons with more frequent disaster occurrence. This process was found to improve institutional capacity for informed decision-making. Such non-Annex I Parties report that when better-quality and more detailed information is used in this model, more relevant recommendations are provided for adaptation options.

61. Several non-Annex I Parties' vulnerability and adaptation assessments have explored the connections between adaptation and mitigation actions, and have successfully mainstreamed mitigation actions throughout many aspects of the economy. For example, a number of non-Annex I Parties have analysed specific sectors, such as the agriculture sector, in terms of how the measures that support adaptation to climate change can, at the same time, result in emission reductions.

D. Mitigation assessments

62. This section describes the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices with regard to conducting and reporting mitigation assessments.

1. Problems and constraints

63. Conducting mitigation assessments requires quality baseline information, which serves as a reference for the progress made in the implementation of resulting actions. Current data challenges and high uncertainties associated with national GHG inventories in some non-Annex I Parties constitute a constraint when assessing the effectiveness of implemented actions.

64. Some mitigation options can be politically sensitive or may result in negative social and/or economic consequences and may conflict with immediate government priorities in some developing countries.

¹² Providing Regional Climates for Impacts Studies.

2. Lessons learned

65. Some non-Annex I Parties are strengthening coordination activities with relevant ministries and other stakeholders at different levels to facilitate the two-way flow of information, thereby ensuring that the relevant policies and measures of each ministry are incorporated into the mitigation section of the national reports.

66. A number of non-Annex I Parties are formulating, implementing, publicizing and regularly updating national and, where appropriate, regional programmes containing measures to reduce GHG emissions. Others are focusing abatement analyses on both the identification of current and future mitigation options.

67. Some non-Annex I Parties are allocating time to regularly review and update proposed abatement options for each sector to reflect new developments and needs. When considering new mitigation technologies and options, some non-Annex I Parties are focusing on key emission sources identified through the key category analysis and updated as part of the national GHG inventory exercise.

3. Best practices

68. Some non-Annex I Parties find the outcomes of mitigation assessments to be more comprehensive when they include:

(a) Information on the sector; the cost of implementation; a description of the action; the economic, social and environmental effects; and any perceived constraints. Some non-Annex I Parties have implemented mitigation measures not only as a means of reducing GHG emissions, but also as a way of taking advantage of collateral benefits. The politically, socially and economically sensitive nature of some mitigation measures requires innovative approaches that guarantee benefits beyond GHG emission reductions, in order for them to appear more appealing to policymakers. Sectors with the highest mitigation potential should be prioritized when presenting the information in national reports;

(b) Specific recommendations for mitigation programmes and information on when approaches which could attract investment under the clean development mechanism are used. Parties recommend providing detailed information on the expected GHG emission reductions estimated against the baseline GHG emissions.

E. Cross-cutting issues

69. This section describes the problems and constraints, lessons learned and best practices with regard to elements that are relevant to most, or all, of the themes covered in chapter III(A–D).

1. Problems and constraints

70. The procedure for accessing funds available from the GEF is perceived by some non-Annex I Parties as complex, and includes a lengthy communication process between the Party, the relevant GEF agency and the GEF.

71. Maintaining the quality of the technical processes involved and the information generated is a primary concern for non-Annex I Parties preparing their NCs. For some non-Annex I Parties, the preparation of NCs has involved conducting, for the first time, a comprehensive stocktaking of climate change relevant information at the national level, which generates a large amount of information. Aside from information that is directly required for NCs, national GHG inventories and vulnerability and adaptation and mitigation assessments, there is also a need for reliable socioeconomic information, particularly for the

establishment of scenarios for vulnerability and adaptation and mitigation assessments. While this is viewed by most non-Annex I Parties as a positive exercise, the task of structuring and analysing this information into the main technical components of NCs is, in most cases, a challenge.

72. When global or regional models are used, for example in the construction of scenarios, procedures for downscaling to appropriate levels require expertise which is frequently not available. In cases where experts are available, they are often few in number and involved in several other task forces and stakeholder groups.

2. Lessons learned

73. Increasingly, some developing countries are recognizing that the benefits of conducting national GHG inventories and vulnerability and adaptation and mitigation assessments go beyond fulfilling the reporting requirements under the Convention. Non-Annex I Parties are reporting the use of information from NCs in national planning, international climate negotiations, and the mobilization of financing for climate change and development activities.

74. Non-Annex I Parties are finding that meeting national climate change reporting requirements can be a challenge for both governmental and non-governmental institutions. They require a great amount of interdisciplinary knowledge and communication between institutions, something which is not always easily attained within the traditional ministerial framework, given that each ministry is usually responsible for a specific sector. Increasingly, non-Annex I Parties are recognizing that the issue of climate change presents an opportunity to work in a more integrated manner and that institutional capacity can be improved through active involvement in the UNFCCC process.

75. Some non-Annex I Parties are performing a short assessment at the beginning of the process of preparing national reports to help them to prioritize training activities and focus resources where they are most needed.

76. To deal with limited capacity at the national level, some non-Annex I Parties are establishing partnerships with regional expert groups that are able to provide the required technical expertise, which in most cases is more cost-efficient. Also, when engaging consultants, non-Annex I Parties are prioritizing regional experts with a good understanding of their national circumstances and familiarity with some of the issues common to countries in their region.

77. Some non-Annex I Parties are using the impacts of climate change on health and the national economy to persuade data generators to provide data for national reporting activities. Additionally, some have also established ongoing national campaigns to emphasize the usefulness of data collection in the correct format.

3. Best practices

78. Non-Annex I Parties are reporting that language-related issues constitute an important part of the UNFCCC process and affect, among other things, training workshops, guidance materials and overall communication with support initiatives. To address these issues, some Parties have:

(a) Invested, where possible, in making technical resources available in national languages to facilitate the process;

(b) Established working relationships with Parties with the same official language, resulting in the provision of training, peer reviews, peer assistance, data sharing, where possible, the exchanging of information on best practices and conducting joint training workshops;

(c) Developed a regional approach to using the PRECIS modelling system, which consists of an agreement to conduct various experiments and share the results with other Parties.

79. Non-Annex I Parties underlined the importance of incorporating quality assurance activities from the start of the process in order to ensure that quality issues are identified in a timely manner and resolved. Most non-Annex I Parties have established a process to review and improve the quality of national reports prior to submission, including by using both international and domestic third-party reviewers.

80. Some non-Annex I Parties have a system to ensure that NC results are communicated back to the relevant agencies and that completed national reports are accompanied by policy papers for high-level decision makers.
